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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

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IN RE: TERRORIST ATTACKS : 03-MDL-1570
ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001 : (GBD) (SN)

- - -

APRIL 6, 2021
THIS TRANSCRIPT CONTAINS
CONFIDENTIAL MATERIAL

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Remote Videotaped
Deposition, taken via Zoom, of CHAS W.
FREEMAN, JR., commencing at 9:08 a.m., on
the above date, before Amanda
Maslynsky-Miller, Certified Realtime
Reporter and Notary Public in and for the
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

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1 obligations on anyone or anonymity.

2 Q. And was the fact that the
3 mosque was able to collect and divert
4 monies to the terrorist entities
5 something that you understood to be a
6 problem?

7 A. There was a consistent
8 problem with local recipients of charity
9 attempting to divert funds. That is the
10 essence of the problem described in the
11 9/11 report.

12 It is not the headquarters'
13 intention that the funds should be
14 diverted, but some were diverted.

15 Q. And at the time were you
16 identifying to 9/11 Commission
17 investigators that the Saudi form of
18 giving through the Kingdom's charitable
19 organizations supported a lack of
20 accountability that enabled the kind of
21 flow of terror financing that you
22 mentioned to the investigators?

23 MR. NASSAR: Objection.

24 MR. HAEFELE: You can

1 answer.

2 THE WITNESS: My statement
3 was not exactly that. My
4 statement was that the nature of
5 charitable donations in the
6 Kingdom at the time, and
7 historically, had not involved
8 strict audit trails.

9 That has since changed. In
10 fact, it began to change even
11 before 9/11.

12 BY MR. HAEFELE:

13 Q. And you understood that the
14 lack of accountability as a result of the
15 lack of any strict audit trails left open
16 the possibility for finances to be
17 diverted, correct?

18 A. So I was informed by the
19 people who monitored this, yes.

20 Q. And the concern that you
21 were identifying to the 9/11 Commission
22 investigators was that the lack of
23 accountability in the flow of money
24 through the Saudi charities allowed Al

1 Form.

2 MR. HAEFELE: You can
3 answer.

4 THE WITNESS: Several times
5 a year. The organization, the
6 Middle East Policy Council, lived
7 very much hand to mouth. The
8 purpose of my trips was mainly to
9 meet with individuals in the Saudi
10 private sector, as well as
11 American company officials, who
12 saw the value of the Middle East
13 Policy Council's work and,
14 therefore, encouraged their
15 headquarters in the United States
16 to provide funding.

17 BY MR. HAEFELE:

18 Q. Who are the senior Saudi
19 officials who took your meetings during
20 these fundraising trips that you
21 referenced in the -- to the 9/11
22 Commission investigators?

23 A. Typically, I would see the
24 King, the Crown Prince, the Minister of

1 Interior, the Foreign Minister or his
2 Deputy, the Chief of the Istikhbarat,
3 which is the foreign intelligence
4 organization of Saudi Arabia. I might
5 also see the Minister of Petroleum and
6 Minerals. All of whom are personal
7 friends.

8 Q. The King, the Crown Prince,
9 the Minister of Interior, the Foreign
10 Minister, the Chief of Foreign
11 Intelligence.

12 Are they all members of the
13 Saudi Royal Family?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Was the Minister of
16 Petroleum and Minerals also a member of
17 the Royal Family?

18 A. No, not at that time.

19 Q. Is he now?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. When you went and did your
22 fundraising trips, were most of your
23 meetings with members of the Saudi Royal
24 Family -- most of your meetings in the

1 declaration?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Did you have any dialogue
4 with anybody at the Department of Justice
5 before you submitted your declaration?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Have you discussed with
8 anybody in the United States government
9 related to the 9/11 attacks?

10 A. Yes. I was consulted
11 frequently by the intelligence agencies,
12 the CIA in particular, in the immediate
13 aftermath of the 9/11 attack.

14 I also periodically reported
15 the substance of my conversations in
16 Saudi Arabia on various topics to the
17 intelligence agencies.

18 Q. When you say you reported
19 the substance of your conversations in
20 Saudi Arabia on various topics to
21 intelligence agencies, what substance of
22 conversations?

23 A. The major interest on the
24 part of the intelligence agencies

1 appeared to be related to the oil sector,
2 oil pricing, oil policy, energy pricing
3 and also objections to American military
4 activity in and around Saudi Arabia, not
5 9/11.

6 Q. And who were the discussions
7 with on the Saudi end?

8 A. Sorry?

9 Q. Who were your discussions
10 with on the Saudi end that you were
11 reporting to the U.S.?

12 A. All of the people I
13 mentioned earlier, the King, the Foreign
14 Minister, the Minister of Interior, the
15 Chief of Foreign Intelligence, the
16 Petroleum Minister, Saudi Aramco.

17 Q. What intelligence agencies
18 were you providing information to?

19 A. CIA.

20 Q. Anybody else?

21 A. No, I don't think so.

22 Q. Did you have any dialogue
23 with any of the State Department or with
24 the DOJ?

1 did you stay at the -- the residence --
2 was the residence part of the consulate
3 or separate?

4 A. The consulate, at that time,
5 was a compound with multiple houses and
6 buildings on it. And one of the smaller
7 houses was allocated to me, if I spent
8 time in Jeddah.

9 For the most part, during
10 the war, however, I flew on a military
11 jet from Riyadh to Jeddah and returned
12 immediately after whatever meeting I had
13 gone there to conduct.

14 Q. All right. When you were in
15 Jeddah, were you staying on the compound
16 where the consulate was?

17 A. If I stayed there, yes.
18 Typically --

19 Q. How often -- often was that?

20 A. I visited Jeddah 52 times
21 from August 2nd, 1990, through the
22 ceasefire on March 2nd, 1991. I think --

23 Q. How do you know -- how do
24 you know it was 52 times?

1 human rights practices. I have many
2 friends in the Kingdom with a wide
3 variety of views, some of which are
4 critical of government policy, and I
5 privately agree with those.

6 Q. Do you view the government
7 of Saudi Arabia as being monolithic, that
8 is, that everybody in the government has
9 the same view of how to run the
10 government?

11 A. Of course not.

12 Q. Have you ever testified in a
13 lawsuit previously?

14 A. No.

15 Q. You testified through
16 declaration in this case previously,
17 correct?

18 A. If you're referring to the
19 document on sovereign immunity I wrote,
20 yes, I suppose so.

21 Q. And when you testified in
22 that regard, did you prepare the document
23 with the assistance of counsel for the
24 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?

1 Q. And you've never been
2 qualified by any court to testify in any
3 litigation, either civil or criminal,
4 correct?

5 A. Well, that follows from my
6 not having ever attempted it.

7 Q. I take it that means you've
8 never been offered as an expert witness
9 in any legal proceedings and not
10 permitted to testify, correct?

11 A. That's right.

12 Q. In this case -- let's see.

13 MR. HAEFELE: Do you need a
14 break now? Now is a natural
15 breaking point if you need a
16 break. If not, we can keep going.

17 THE WITNESS: I'm okay.

18 BY MR. HAEFELE:

19 Q. All right. What is it that
20 WAMY has asked you to testify about in
21 this case?

22 A. They've asked me to draw on
23 my personal and professional experience,
24 as someone who was responsible for U.S.

1 relations with Saudi Arabia, about the
2 Kingdom, its history, its relation to
3 religion, its relationships to terrorist
4 activities overseas. And that is what I
5 have done. That is the subject of my
6 report.

7 Q. If we can turn back to your
8 report, which is marked as Exhibit-236.

9 COURT REPORTER: It's
10 Exhibit-536.

11 MR. HAEFELE: I have it as
12 536, yes. The second item that we
13 marked today, I think. Did I say
14 something different?

15 BY MR. HAEFELE:

16 Q. Ambassador Freeman, do you
17 have a copy of your report with you?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. So it may make it easier.
20 We can put it up on the screen, but it
21 may make it easier if you're looking
22 through your report.

23 Is one of the areas that is
24 a topic of your testimony, the history,

1 politics and culture of Saudi Arabia,
2 including Wahhabism?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And another area of your
5 report is world conflicts and their
6 relationship to 9/11?

7 A. I wouldn't put it that way.

8 Q. Well, look at your report on
9 the -- on the second paragraph.

10 MR. HAEFELE: Highlight that
11 second paragraph.

12 BY MR. HAEFELE:

13 Q. I refer you to the third
14 line down, World conflicts and their
15 relationship to 9/11.

16 If you didn't put it that
17 way, who did?

18 A. No, those are my words,
19 referring to Afghanistan.

20 Q. Okay. So is another one of
21 the topics of your report world conflicts
22 and their relationship to 9/11?

23 A. Specifically Afghanistan.

24 Q. And is another area --

1 subject of your report the relationship
2 between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and
3 WAMY?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. And is another area of your
6 report the relationship between the
7 Kingdom, Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. All right. And that
10 outlines the four areas that are
11 referenced as being the subject of your
12 testimony in this report; do you agree?

13 Where it says, I have been
14 asked by WAMY to provide expert testimony
15 concerning the history, politics and
16 culture of Saudi Arabia, including
17 Wahhabism, world conflicts and their
18 relationship to 9/11, the relationship
19 between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and
20 WAMY, as well as the relationship between
21 the Kingdom, Osama bin Laden, and Al
22 Qaeda.

23 Are there any other areas
24 that you've been asked to opine about?

1 A. So those are the focuses.

2 Q. When you say "those are the
3 focuses" -- I should add other than
4 rebutting some of the testimony of some
5 of the plaintiffs' experts, are there any
6 other subject areas that you have been
7 called upon to offer your own opinions
8 about?

9 A. I've offered my own opinions
10 in the report, and they stand as they
11 are.

12 Q. And that's what I'm asking
13 you.

14 At the outset of your
15 report, you have identified what WAMY has
16 asked you to opine about.

17 And that is in this
18 paragraph, correct?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And did you answer any
21 other -- or offer opinions in any other
22 areas other than what you were asked to
23 opine on by WAMY?

24 A. Not really.

1 delegating responsibility to many people
2 for looking at many questions, including
3 these questions.

4 My personal involvement,
5 however, is as stated, a single meeting
6 with the World Muslim League.

7 Q. Have you opined at all as to
8 whether any Saudi-sponsored charity has
9 given material support to Al Qaeda?

10 MR. NASSAR: Objection to
11 form.

12 THE WITNESS: Yes. Yes, I
13 have offered opinions on that.

14 BY MR. HAEFELE:

15 Q. In your report?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Where in your report is that
18 opinion?

19 A. It is throughout the report.
20 It is the nature of Saudi charities
21 organized by the government, including
22 WAMY, about which I am speaking, to
23 represent the interest of the Kingdom of
24 Saudi Arabia in the religious sphere.

1 Q. And you just told us that
2 you don't recall -- you recall that in
3 the 1991 time period Al Qaeda hadn't
4 existed yet.

5 Did they come into existence
6 while you were in Saudi Arabia?

7 A. As I left. I think in 1992.

8 Q. And so your recollection is
9 that after you left Saudi Arabia, after
10 1992, is when Al Qaeda came into
11 existence, correct?

12 A. I was closely tracking the
13 probability of terrorism as a result of
14 the U.S. military overstaying their
15 welcome in the Kingdom. And I recall
16 hearing of the founding of Al Qaeda
17 pretty much as I left the Kingdom.

18 Q. So your recollection would
19 be it was -- I'm sorry, what month did
20 you leave the Kingdom?

21 A. August 1992.

22 Q. So it would be in around
23 August of '92 is what your recollection
24 is as to when Al Qaeda was founded?

1 BY MR. HAEFELE:

2 Q. Mr. Freeman, your testimony
3 is based on your personal information.
4 You've already told me it's not based on
5 documents.

6 If your testimony is based
7 on your personal information and your
8 personal experiences, then I'm asking you
9 what your personal experiences are that
10 support your opinion in this regard.

11 If you don't have an opinion
12 in this regard, just tell me and we'll
13 move on.

14 MR. GOETZ: And, Robert, you
15 have to let him answer the
16 questions completely. He was not
17 allowed that courtesy.

18 BY MR. HAEFELE:

19 Q. Do you have anything else to
20 add to your answer, Mr. Freeman?

21 A. In my interest in Saudi
22 Arabia, which I left in 1992, returned to
23 frequently as a visitor, I was very much
24 aware, as the '90s proceeded, as a

1 steadily tightening security perimeter
2 around various buildings and compounds,
3 particularly where foreigners resided.

4 And the reason for this was
5 a series of terrorist incidents. I
6 remember there was a series of incidents.
7 I was not resident in the Kingdom. I was
8 never attacked at that time. And so I
9 cannot tell you exactly when and where
10 the incidents occurred. But there were a
11 series of them.

12 Q. Would you agree that Wahhabi
13 ideology is narrow-minded?

14 A. It's puritanical.

15 Q. Is it, in your view, harsh
16 and unforgiving or austere?

17 MR. GOETZ: Objection to
18 form.

19 THE WITNESS: The word
20 "Wahhabi" conceals a multitude of
21 beliefs and sects. If you are
22 referring to the Saudi official
23 Wahhabism, this is a quietest form
24 of Wahhabism, which is supportive

1 of the monarchy. In fact, it
2 asserts that a primary duty of any
3 Muslim is to support a Muslim
4 government. And in this case, the
5 Kingdom of Saudi Arabia fits that
6 definition.

7 If you talk about Wahhabism
8 outside of Saudi Arabia, there are
9 a great number of movements that
10 have been labeled as such which
11 have no connection whatsoever to
12 those inside Saudi Arabia.

13 BY MR. HAEFELE:

14 Q. Would you agree -- would you
15 agree that the atmosphere created by the
16 Kingdom as a very narrow-minded, austere
17 version of Islam certainly helped to
18 spawn Al Qaeda?

19 MR. GOETZ: Objection.
20 Form.

21 THE WITNESS: No, I would
22 not agree with that. Osama bin
23 Laden was not a Wahhabi. His
24 ancestors did not come from a

1 region where that particular
2 version of Islam prevailed. It
3 was more Sunni influenced. He
4 grew up in a part of the Kingdom
5 which is also not Wahhabi.

6 He apparently came into
7 contact with people from the
8 Muslim Brotherhood in university,
9 but did not show a great deal of
10 interest in religion until his
11 exile in Sudan, when he was
12 recruited by the disciples
13 of Sayyid al Qutb, who represents
14 an entirely different strain of
15 Islam, to embrace the extremism
16 for which he later became famous.

17 BY MR. HAEFELE:

18 Q. So you don't agree that the
19 atmosphere created by the Kingdom's
20 narrow-minded, austere version of Islam
21 certainly spawned Al Qaeda?

22 MR. GOETZ: Objection.

23 Form. Repetitive.

24 THE WITNESS: Al Qaeda is

1 the enemy of the Kingdom, not the
2 product of it.

3 BY MR. HAEFELE:

4 Q. I'm asking you the answer to
5 my question, not some other answer to
6 some other question. I'm going to
7 rephrase it, because it's not --

8 MR. HAEFELE: Don't object,
9 Fred, because he hasn't answered
10 my question. You can object, but
11 I'm just going to ask for an
12 answer to my question.

13 BY MR. HAEFELE:

14 Q. Would you agree, sir, that
15 the atmosphere created by the Kingdom's
16 very narrow-minded, austere version of
17 Islam certainly helped to spawn Al Qaeda?

18 MR. GOETZ: Objection.

19 THE WITNESS: No.

20 MR. GOETZ: Repetitive.

21 THE WITNESS: No. That is a
22 common foreign narrative. I do
23 not agree with it.

24 MR. HAEFELE: Can we queue

1

- - -

2

THE WITNESS: Yes.

3

BY MR. HAEFELE:

4

Q. And these are four books --

5

well, let me ask you this: Are the four

6

books that are referenced here and the

7

items referenced in your footnotes the

8

entirety of your materials that you

9

relied upon to derive your opinions,

10

other than your personal experience?

11

A. No. As you noted earlier, I

12

had multiple assignments in multiple

13

parts of the world. Every place that I

14

went I learned both the language and read

15

the history and the culture of the place.

16

I read everything I could on

17

Saudi Arabia when I was assigned there.

18

There was very little of value. Some of

19

the best material was provided to me by

20

the Israeli embassy in Washington, which

21

I asked to brief me on Israel's views of

22

Saudi Arabia. And that consisted of

23

books written by eminent professors at

24

the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, all

1 of which --

2 Q. And have you -- sorry, go
3 ahead.

4 A. All of which I read and
5 found them sound in scholarship and
6 lacking in what the Germans called
7 grundwahrheit, meaning ground truth. The
8 authors had never been to the Kingdom,
9 they were writing about a place they did
10 not know personally.

11 Q. And to the extent that you
12 relied upon those documents, are they
13 cited in your report, or did you omit
14 them from your report on purpose?

15 A. No, I'm -- no, I'm not
16 testifying from documents. I was asked
17 for a brief reading list, which I
18 provided.

19 Q. All right. So any document
20 that you're relying upon for any part of
21 your opinion is cited in your report,
22 correct?

23 A. My opinion does not depend
24 on documents. I cited it to corroborate

1 my opinion, not the other way around.

2 Q. How did you select what
3 materials you would include in your brief
4 reading list here?

5 A. These seemed to me to be the
6 most objective works on the Kingdom.
7 After 9/11, there was an avalanche of
8 polemic writing. Most of the books that
9 were produced are really not worth
10 reading. These are.

11 Q. How did you select the
12 materials that you would cite to in your
13 report? And -- well, how would you
14 select materials that you would cite in
15 your report to corroborate your opinions?

16 A. I wrote the report. And
17 then I looked online for things of which
18 I was already familiar or which addressed
19 the topic.

20 Q. And if you found something
21 that was contrary to your opinions, what
22 did you do with that?

23 A. I didn't find much that was
24 contrary to my opinions.

1 Q. Two of the items that's on
2 your brief reading list, the two Robert
3 Lacey items, there's nothing in your
4 report that's sourced to those two items.

5 A. No.

6 Q. What opinion in your report,
7 if anything, is reliant upon or relied
8 upon those to corroborate your opinions?

9 A. Nothing directly. The first
10 book is a very good account of the
11 history of the House of Saud. The second
12 is an update, referring to modern times.

13 Q. We're going to get through
14 it a lot quicker if you just confine your
15 answers to my question.

16 The question is, is there
17 anything in your report that either of
18 the Lacey books corroborates?

19 A. Plenty.

20 Q. All right. And if you went
21 through your report, would you be able to
22 explain why it is that you didn't cite to
23 the Lacey books to corroborate what's in
24 your report?

1 A. Because I am -- I was
2 writing the report on the basis of
3 personal experience and knowledge, which
4 Mr. Lacey also did.

5 Q. And the Steve Coll book
6 that's cited, it's cited three times in
7 your report.

8 Is it fair to say that you
9 cited it for each item where you intended
10 to rely upon the book as a source to
11 corroborate your opinions?

12 A. Steve Coll interviewed me
13 for his book. I looked to it for dates
14 and specific material because I knew he
15 had included it.

16 Q. Anything else?

17 A. No.

18 Q. All right. And, similarly,
19 there's a Rundell cited five times in
20 your report, but it doesn't actually
21 indicate that it's David Rundell or that
22 it's the Vision or Mirage book that's
23 cited here.

24 The citations to Rundell in

1 your report, is that intended to be to
2 this book?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And have you cited the
5 Rundell book for each opinion in your
6 report that you relied upon -- where you
7 relied upon the book?

8 A. I didn't really rely upon
9 the book. But it is a very excellent
10 account of Saudi history with specific
11 reference to religious and political
12 tensions in the Kingdom.

13 Q. Is it fair to say that your
14 report is mostly prepared based on your
15 own personal experience?

16 A. It is based on my personal
17 and professional experience, yes.

18 Q. And is it accurate to say
19 that whatever experience that you have on
20 the history, politics and culture of
21 Saudi Arabia, including Wahhabism, is
22 based in large part on your three-year
23 stint as Ambassador to the Kingdom?

24 A. Significantly, yes.

1 fact.

2 Q. Have you seen any documents
3 that indicates any investigation into the
4 internal controls of the money that was
5 distributed by WAMY to any of its branch
6 offices or from any of its branch
7 offices?

8 A. Internal investigations by
9 whom?

10 Q. Well, internal
11 investigations by WAMY.

12 A. No, I've seen no documents.

13 Q. Have you seen any
14 investigations by anybody else into WAMY?

15 A. There is references to WAMY
16 in the 9/11 Commission report.

17 Q. All right. And have you
18 seen any documents other than the 9/11
19 Commission report that discuss
20 investigations into the internal controls
21 of the finances of WAMY?

22 A. Yes. I saw a report from --
23 dated 2018 on the issue of financial
24 controls relating to money laundering and

1 official of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?

2 A. No. I do not, for the most
3 part, engage in consultant work. That is
4 not what I do.

5 I prefer to do things rather
6 than advise other people on how to do
7 their business.

8 Q. Were you ever asked for your
9 aid or consultancy with regard to
10 opinions related to the Kingdom where you
11 provided that consultation to either
12 lawyers or lobbyists for the Kingdom of
13 Saudi Arabia?

14 A. Never.

15 Q. Is it your opinion that
16 Saudi charities could not or would not
17 have provided support to Al Qaeda because
18 the Saudi Arabia government was
19 ideologically opposed to Al Qaeda?

20 A. The Saudi Arabian government
21 regarded Al Qaeda as its principal enemy.
22 The internal security mechanisms of the
23 Kingdom are notoriously effective.
24 Anybody who tried to help Al Qaeda would

1 have suffered extreme penalty.

2 Q. Do you know who Wa'el
3 Julaidan is?

4 A. Sorry?

5 Q. Do you know who Wa'el
6 Julaidan is?

7 A. I don't know that name. Can
8 you spell it for me?

9 Q. W-A, apostrophe, E-L. And
10 there's various ways to spell the last
11 name, J-E-L-A-I-D-E-N is the way I would
12 spell it.

13 A. No, I don't know him. I do
14 not know Wa'el Julaidan.

15 Q. Have you ever worked
16 professionally for WAMY?

17 A. Never.

18 Q. Have you ever worked
19 professionally with WAMY?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Have you ever worked with or
22 for any Saudi charity or any NGO in
23 Saudi -- in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?

24 A. No, I've never worked for

1 Ambassador, correct?

2 A. Yes. In addition to many
3 other agencies.

4 Q. What other agencies?

5 A. Well, for example, the
6 United States had a military training
7 mission to the Saudi Arabia National
8 Guard, a military training mission to the
9 five other Saudi Armed Forces, meaning
10 the Land Forces, the Air Force, the Air
11 Defense Force, the Navy and the Frontier
12 Forces.

13 The -- there were people
14 embedded in Saudi ministries. I
15 mentioned the U.S. Geological Survey, 43
16 people embedded in the Royal Saudi
17 Geological Survey doing a survey of Saudi
18 mineral and metals resources. Census
19 people who helped build the Saudi census
20 capability and so forth.

21 A lot of people --

22 Q. I want to -- I just want to
23 clarify, though. I want to stick you to
24 the terrorism issues --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- informing you on
3 terrorism issues as well?

4 A. Anybody who had information
5 would have provided it. You asked the
6 principal sources of information, and I
7 gave them to you.

8 Q. Okay. All right. And
9 since -- since you've left, are those
10 still the principal sources of
11 information to the person that -- you
12 know, the people who have succeeded over
13 there?

14 A. I don't know that
15 personally, but I would expect so. These
16 are institutional relationships. They're
17 longstanding. They are commonplace in
18 embassies throughout the world. Saudi
19 Arabia is not unique.

20 Q. And would you surmise that
21 the resources devoted to terrorism since
22 you left the Kingdom have probably
23 increased or decreased or stayed the
24 same?

1 President for coordinating all agency
2 operations in the country to which he or
3 she is assigned.

4 Q. But my question -- I'm
5 sorry, my question was -- I was limiting
6 my question to just terrorism issues.

7 Is it true that it's a yes,
8 if you just limit it to terrorism issues?

9 A. Yes. I would have been the
10 ultimate decision-maker on whether to
11 report something to Washington, whether
12 to make a recommendation on how to deal
13 with it, and often would have been the
14 person who went to meet a senior Saudi
15 official to make an argument on behalf of
16 the U.S. government.

17 Q. Just so I'm clear, though,
18 what my question is, is I'm asking you,
19 did you trust those sources of
20 information to make the assessments that
21 were derived out of the discussion group
22 in order to do your functions?

23 A. If you're asking whether I
24 had competent staff, yes, I did. But I

1 Q. When you say it was
2 "supposed to be," are you -- do you have
3 information that leads you to believe
4 that's not correct?

5 A. This was an issue in dispute
6 at the time. There were trials, and that
7 was the finding in the trials.

8 Q. My question to you is, are
9 you doubting that? Do you think it was
10 somebody else that was responsible for
11 that terror attack?

12 A. I have no reason to believe
13 it was anybody else.

14 Q. Okay. Your report, I think,
15 indicates that attacks against the
16 Kingdom, against the monarchy, were
17 taking place before September 11th.

18 Which attacks are you
19 referring to that were -- that Al Qaeda
20 was responsible for?

21 A. I can't be specific on that.

22 Q. Are you aware of any?

23 A. All I know is that when I
24 visited Saudi Arabia in the late 1990s,

1 every time I entered a government
2 building, I either read signage or heard
3 an audiotape denouncing Al Qaeda and
4 similar extremists and urging the
5 citizenry to be vigilant against possible
6 attacks.

7 So, clearly, there was a
8 great concern on the part of the Kingdom
9 and its institutions about this enemy of
10 their state. Openly proclaimed enemy, I
11 should say.

12 Q. So my question is pretty
13 specific. I want to know what you are
14 basing your opinion on that there were Al
15 Qaeda attacks on the Kingdom before
16 September 11th, 2001. If you know any,
17 I'd like to know.

18 A. I can't make specific
19 attributions.

20 Q. Okay. You are aware that Al
21 Qaeda was believed to be responsible for
22 the bombing of U.S. embassies in East
23 Africa in 1998, correct?

24 A. Yes.

1 probably a long -- it's probably
2 near the end, I think.

3 Keep going. Just scroll
4 down to the next page, please.
5 Next page, please. Next page.

6 That's it. Sorry. If you
7 go back, you can see the bottom,
8 there is Tidewater? Right there.

9 THE WITNESS: Yeah, that's
10 the comment that I quoted.

11 BY MR. MALONEY:

12 Q. So you quoted a blogger who
13 was commenting on Colonel Patrick Lang's
14 posting, correct?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And it looks like you lifted
17 this entire quote from Tidewater and put
18 it into your report; is that right?

19 A. Yes. Because it rang
20 absolutely true.

21 Q. Do you know who Tidewater
22 is?

23 A. No idea.

24 Q. So you're relying on an

1 unknown, anonymous blogger for this
2 information that's contained in here?

3 A. No. I know most of this
4 information on my own.

5 Q. Did you -- I'm sorry.

6 A. I found it a useful summary
7 of the politics of the region and the
8 origins of the hijackers from that
9 region.

10 Q. Do you know that -- which of
11 the hijackers are from that region?

12 A. Some of them have names
13 which are typical tribal names from that
14 region.

15 Q. I guess what I'm asking you
16 is, did you research this? Did you look
17 at the names of the Saudi hijackers and
18 determine or find out or investigate what
19 region of Saudi Arabia they were from?

20 A. Right after 9/11, when they
21 were identified, yes. I spent some time
22 doing that for the reasons given here.

23 Q. I'm sorry, you did that why?

24 A. For the reasons given here.

1 That is, there was a lot of
2 undifferentiated commentary about Saudi
3 Arabia that completely missed the
4 subtleties and nuances and the details
5 that are contained in this particular
6 entry that we're looking at.

7 Q. Okay. So just tell me, if
8 you can, what research you did on that
9 back in the day?

10 A. I looked at the list of
11 hijackers and I compared it to the tribal
12 names that I was aware of from that
13 region.

14 I also looked at the
15 published information on the hijackers,
16 and I was very struck by the dominance of
17 people from this region.

18 Q. Did the publication say that
19 they were from that region?

20 A. Which publication?

21 Q. The ones you just referred
22 to.

23 A. Names -- tribal names exist.

24 Q. I want to -- I want to --

1 about the blogger Tidewater?

2 A. Nothing.

3 Q. Did you ever speak to
4 Tidewater?

5 A. Nope.

6 Q. And when you cite the
7 Tidewater in Footnote 7 of your report,
8 you say -- you describe Tidewater as a
9 former U.S. intelligence officer who
10 wishes to remain anonymous.

11 How do you know he was a
12 former U.S. intelligence officer?

13 A. I think I asked the operator
14 of the blog, Sic Semper Tyrannis, retired
15 Colonel Lang, if he would identify the
16 person who wrote such a thorough and, in
17 my view, accurate description of the
18 origin of the hijackers and was told that
19 he wished to remain anonymous.

20 Q. Well, how do you know he was
21 a former U.S. intelligence officer?

22 A. Because I trust Colonel
23 Lang.

24 Q. So you've never actually

1 spoken to Tidewater at all?

2 A. No.

3 Q. And you don't, in fact, know
4 that he's a former U.S. intelligence
5 officer, correct?

6 A. I have the assurance of
7 somebody I trust that he is.

8 Q. All right. And the only way
9 that you know that he preferred to remain
10 anonymous is because this Mr. Lang -- is
11 it Colonel Lang -- told you that he was
12 U.S. intelligence or a former U.S.
13 intelligence officer who didn't want
14 anybody to know who he was?

15 A. I asked Colonel Lang, as I
16 recall, whether I could identify him.
17 And that was the reply I got.

18 Q. So you don't, in fact, know,
19 other than by secondhand information, who
20 he is; and you don't, in fact, know,
21 other than secondhand information, that
22 he wants to remain anonymous; is that a
23 fair characterization?

24 A. I've accepted the assurance

1 of someone on both points. I have no
2 direct knowledge of that, no.

3 Q. By taking information off of
4 the Internet from a source that you've
5 never spoken to, someone that you only
6 know who they are through secondhand
7 information, and taking secondhand
8 information and not being allowed to
9 speak to the source, based on a refusal
10 by the person that runs the blog, that's
11 what you're basing your information on to
12 be able to cite to him as a former U.S.
13 intelligence officer?

14 MR. GOETZ: Objection.

15 Form.

16 THE WITNESS: No. The
17 reason this caught my eye was that
18 it coincided with everything that
19 I personally knew, on the basis of
20 looking at the names of the
21 hijackers, the description of
22 them, their whereabouts, and what
23 I knew about that particular
24 region of Saudi Arabia, which I

1 visited.

2 So the information that
3 whoever Tidewater is provided
4 struck me as exceptionally
5 accurate and perceptive.

6 I'm not going on him, I'm
7 going on my own views.

8 BY MR. HAEFELE:

9 Q. Well, when you wrote your
10 report and you cited Tidewater, why
11 didn't you cite it citing to an Internet
12 URL that provided us with a blog from
13 some guy who is saying exactly what you
14 wrote in your report instead of
15 characterizing him as a former U.S.
16 intelligence officer?

17 MR. GOETZ: Objection.

18 Form.

19 MR. HAEFELE: You can answer
20 the question.

21 THE WITNESS: Yes. The
22 information that Tidewater wrote
23 strikes me, in my judgment, as
24 accurate and detailed.

1 Q. So can you just give us an
2 estimate, Ambassador Freeman, of when you
3 talk about these meetings with Saudi
4 government officials, people in Saudi
5 business and also U.S. intelligence
6 officials that you've had in the years
7 since you left the Foreign Service that
8 have informed your opinions in the case,
9 how many meetings are we talking about?

10 A. Probably two to three a
11 year.

12 Q. For a period of how many
13 years?

14 A. I believe 15.

15 Q. You were asked a lot of
16 questions about the Mid East Policy
17 Council. I want to just ask you a very
18 few about that.

19 I think the implication
20 is -- here is that Saudi Arabia bought
21 the opinions of the Middle East Policy
22 Council and everybody associated with it.

23 Is that true?

24 A. No. The board was entirely